



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Upper Columbia Area Office  
1917 Marsh Road  
Yakima, Washington 98901-2058

IN REPLY REFER TO:

UCA-1100

PRJ-1.10

FEB 18 2005

Dear Interested Party:

In February 2003, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior, acting through Reclamation, to conduct the Yakima River Basin Water Storage Feasibility Study (Storage Study). The Storage Study will evaluate storage options for improving water supplies for the Yakima River basin.

An appraisal-level assessment of the Black Rock alternative has been undertaken as an early component of the Storage Study as directed by Congress. The analysis in the assessment was completed only to the level necessary to compare the several alternatives under consideration in the study and is not a feasibility study.

Enclosed is the *Summary Report - Appraisal Assessment of the Black Rock Alternative - A Component of the Yakima River Basin Water Storage Feasibility Study, Washington* (Summary Report). The Summary Report is also posted on the Internet at the following Website:

[http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/storage\\_study/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/storage_study/index.html). The Executive Summary of this report was released on February 9, 2005. The technical reports from which the information in the Summary Report is drawn will be released by February 25, 2005, and will be posted on the same Website.

Reclamation will now continue with Pre-Plan Formulation (Phase 2 of the September 2003 Plan of Study). This includes such activities as the availability of water from the Yakima River, conducting studies to define normative instream flow criteria, and identifying preliminary benefits. A range of technically viable alternatives would be compared in the next phase of the study (the plan formulation phase) and an alternative(s) selected for further analysis in the final (feasibility) phase of the study.

As a matter of policy, Reclamation requires non-Federal parties to share in the costs of feasibility studies and to fund a portion of the construction costs of Federal water projects. In light of this policy, the preliminary cost estimates of the Black Rock alternative and current Federal budgetary constraints, Reclamation is not reaching a decision at this time as to whether the Black Rock alternative will be carried forward into the next phase of the Storage Study or dropped

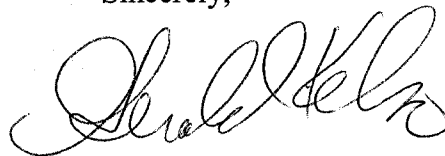
from further consideration. Rather, Reclamation will consult with the State of Washington (which is cost sharing in the Storage Study), the Yakama Nation, the potential water exchange

participants, project proponents, and other interested parties before reaching a decision in this regard. It is anticipated that a decision will be reached by the fall of 2005.

Reclamation will commence the process of receiving input from interested parties with a series of public information meetings in the spring of 2005. The initial meetings will be designed to give people an opportunity to ask questions about the content of the Summary Report and the supporting technical reports. Later in the spring and continuing into the summer, Reclamation will carry out a public involvement program to give interested parties the opportunity to address the Black Rock alternative as well as all other currently identified in-basin alternatives (Bumping Lake enlargement, Wymer dam and reservoir, and a Keechelus-Kachess pipeline) and suggest other alternatives for consideration. These discussions will also include the question of whether the Black Rock alternative should be included in the next phase of the Storage Study or eliminated from further consideration.

As mentioned earlier, the supporting technical series reports are being posted on the Internet as they are released. If you would rather have a hard copy or a CD version of the reports, please contact Mr. Kim McCartney at 509-575-5848, extension 370. Also, if you have questions about this Summary Report or the Storage Study, please feel free to contact Mr. Kim McCartney.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald Kelso", written in a cursive style.

Gerald Kelso  
Area Manager

Enclosure